

# 2008 Summer Reading

**Grades 6-8**

**Compiled by the Newton Middle School Librarians**

## **Realistic Fiction**

**Airball: My Life in Briefs** by P.L. Harkrader

Basketball meets "The Emperor's New Clothes" when Kirby's coach decides that the only way to improve the team's losing record is new--and invisible--uniforms. The team humors him by showing up for practice in their underwear. But what about game day?

**All of the Above** by Shelley Pearsall

A burned-out teacher and his bored middle school students try to turn the school year around when they take on a challenge: build the world's largest tetrahedron. They might even succeed, if the complications of real life don't get in their way.

**Big Field** by Mike Lupica

When fourteen-year-old baseball player Hutch feels threatened by the arrival of a new teammate named Darryl, he tries to work through his insecurities about both Darryl and his remote and silent father, who was once a great ballplayer too.

**Dairy Queen** by Murdock

DJ gets a summer job training the rival high school's spoiled quarterback. She enjoys busting his butt with a tough regimen of weights and running, until she starts to fall for him. After all, a popular jock would never go out with an athletic farm girl, would he?

**If a Tree Falls at Lunch Period** by Gennifer Choldenko

Kirsten's life is falling apart. Walker hopes to survive at his new private school. Together they deal with issues of race, wealth, weight, and bullies while uncovering a long-kept secret about themselves.

**Love, Stargirl** by Jerry Spinelli

Stargirl, in this companion to the first book, misses Leo and begins writing him a long letter describing her new life in Pennsylvania, including the bizarre neighbors who enter her life and capture her interest. But will she ever see Leo again?

**Schooled** by Gordon Korman

Capricorn (aka Cap) has been homeschooled his whole life by his hippie grandmother. When she falls and has to spend a long time in rehabilitation, Cap goes to live with a guidance counselor and her daughter and enrolls in public school where he is not prepared for how things are... Will Cap, an independent spirit, be changed by the realities of public school?

**Waiting for Normal** by Leslie Connor

Twelve-year-old Addie tries to cope with her mother's erratic behavior and being separated from her beloved stepfather and half-sisters when she and her mother go to live in a small trailer by the railroad tracks on the outskirts of Schenectady, New York.

**Zen and the Art of Faking It** by Jordan Sonnenblick

He's been a skater in California, a "bible thumper" in Alabama, and a preppie in Texas; now that he's moved to Ohio, San Lee needs a new identity. But his choice to pass himself off as a Zen master is less than enlightened.

## **Mystery & Adventure**

**Black Duck** by Janet Taylor Lisle

Years afterwards, Ruben Hart tells the story of how, in 1929 Rhode Island, his family and his best friend's family were caught up in the violent competition among groups trying to control the local rum-smuggling trade.

**Cover-up** by John Feinstein

Two teenagers learn that every player on a professional football team--which is supposed to play in the Super Bowl--has failed their drug test and the owner has covered up the results, and now they must find a way to prove it.

**Gilda Joyce: The Ladies of the Lake** by Jennifer Allison

Psychic investigator Gilda transfers to a posh private school and she's soon on the trail of ghosts in the locker room, a mysterious drowning in the past, and a secret society that meets in the ruins by the lake.

**Kingdom of the Golden Dragon** by Isabel Allende

Sixteen-year-old Alexander Cold accompanies his grandmother, a writer for a geography magazine, to the remote Forbidden Kingdom in the Himalayas to help locate a sacred statue of a golden dragon before it is stolen by a greedy outsider.

**The London Eye Mystery** by Siobhan Dowd

What goes up, must come down--unless you're Ted and Kat's cousin Salim. Salim boards the famous London Eye ferris wheel, but when his car comes back down, he's not on it.

**The Mysterious Edge of the Heroic World** by E.L. Konigsburg

Amedeo and William find themselves working together on a house sale for Amedeo's eccentric neighbor, Mrs. Zender, whose house is crammed with memorabilia and stories that date back to Nazi Germany.

**Peak** by Roland Smith

Peak loves to climb. Until now all he could climb were the skyscrapers in New York City (illegally). When Peak is given the opportunity to join his long-last father on an Everest expedition, he realizes that if he makes it he will be the youngest person ever to reach the summit. That is unless the mountain gets to him first...

**Skeleton Man** by Joseph Bruchac

Molly's parents go out to dinner one night and never come back. When the police find out she's alone, they send her to live with a strange uncle who has shown up out of nowhere.

## **Historical Fiction**

**Elijah from Buxton** by Christopher Paul Curtis

Elijah lives in Buxton, Canada, which is the last stop on the Underground Railroad. Life is good, until he needs to cross the border and the realities of slavery come to life.

**Fever 1793** by Laurie Halse Anderson

It's summer 1793 and the streets of Philadelphia are abuzz with mosquitoes and rumors of fever. Mattie spends her days avoiding chores and making plans to turn the family business into the finest Philadelphia has ever seen. But when fever strikes close to home, Mattie's struggle to build a new life must give way to the fight to stay alive.

**The Invention of Hugo Cabret** by Brian Selznick

Hugo, an orphan living behind the walls of a Paris train station in 1931 winds the station clocks as his uncle used to do and works on restoring an automaton his father had worked on before his death in a fire. When he is discovered, his dream of bringing the invention to life is threatened in this suspenseful story told in art and words.

**Red Moon at Sharpsburg** by Rosemary Wells

Even though the odds are against her and the Civil War has ruined her home and given her a view of the darker side of humanity, thirteen-year-old India Moody continues to aspire to become a scientist and attend Oberlin College.

**Revolution Is Not a Dinner Party: A Novel** by Compestine

Starting in 1972 when she is nine years old, Ling, the daughter of two doctors, struggles to make sense of the communists' Cultural Revolution, which empties stores of food, homes of appliances deemed "bourgeois," and people of laughter.

**Uprising** by Margaret Peterson Haddix

Newly arrived in New York City in 1910, Bella is desperate to send money home to her family in Italy, and becomes one of the hundreds of workers at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. But one fateful March night, a spark ignites some cloth in the factory, resulting in a fire that will become one of the worst workplace disasters in history.

**The Wednesday Wars** by Gary Schmidt

It's 1967 and every Wednesday afternoon Holling is left alone with Mrs. Baker while the other students go either to Hebrew School or Catechism. As if that wasn't punishment enough, she's making him read Shakespeare!

## **Fantasy & Science Fiction**

**The Alchemyst: The Secret of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel** by Michael Scott

Josh and Sophie Newman discover his boss Nick Fleming is actually the Alchemyst, Nicholas Flamel, born in the year 1330. Nick and his wife, Perry possess the Book of Abraham the Mage which contains the secret of eternal life. When Nick's arch enemy, Dr. John Dee steals the book and kidnaps Perry, Nick has 30 days to recover it before his life and possibly the human race, ends

**The Arrival** by Shaun Tan

The pictures tell the story in this spellbinding--and wordless--graphic novel about a man forced to leave his family behind as he emigrates to a new country full of strange creatures and confusing customs.

**Battle for the Labyrinth** by Rick Riordan (Percy Jackson & the Olympians)

Another year, another school. Percy Jackson realizes he won't last long at Goode High School if he can't get past the bloodsucking cheerleaders at orientation.

**Book of a Thousand Days** by Shannon Hale

Fifteen-year-old Dashti, sworn to obey her sixteen-year-old mistress, the Lady Saren, shares Saren's years of punishment locked in a tower, then brings her safely to the lands of her true love, where both must hide who they are as they work as kitchen maids.

**Corydon and the Island of Monsters** by Druitt

An outcast shepherd boy is welcomed into an unusual family of creatures that includes Medusa and the Minotaur, but their family life is threatened when the Greek warrior Perseus leads thousands of soldiers in an attack on their island.

**Dragon's Keep** by Janet Lee Carey

In 1145 A.D., as foretold by Merlin, fourteen-year-old Rosalind, who will be the twenty-first Pendragon Queen of Wilde Island, has much to accomplish to fulfill her destiny, while hiding from her people the dragon's claw she was born with that reflects only one of her mother's dark secrets.

**Epic** by Conor Kostick

Life on the colony of New Earth is a grind of hard work and poverty. The only bright spot is Epic, a computer role-playing game where there are dragons to slay and treasures to uncover--if you can keep from getting killed.

**Theodosia and the Serpents of Chaos** by RL LaFevers

Eleven-year-old Theodosia has the ability to detect black magic and ancient curses that are attached to objects in the Museum of Legends and Antiquities, which her father is the curator of, and discovers that a new artifact from Egypt is cursed and she must return it to the tomb it was excavated from before it destroys the British Empire.

**The Uglies** by Scott Westerfeld

Tally is looking forward to her sixteenth birthday when she will have the operation to become drop-dead beautiful, a pretty, until she meets Shay who has other ideas. The adventures they share change the way Tally looks at their "perfect" world.

## **Entering 6th Grade**

**Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules** by Jeff Kinney

Greg Heffley tells in words and cartoons about his summer vacation when he returns to middle school and tries to keep his older brother, Rodrick, from telling everyone about Greg's most humiliating experience of the summer. A favorite of boys especially!

**The Glitch in Sleep (The Seems)** by John Hulme

When twelve-year-old Becker Drane is recruited by The Seems, a parallel universe that runs everything in The World, he must fix a disastrous glitch in the Department of Sleep that threatens the ability of everyone to fall asleep.

**The Golden Dreams of Carlo Chuchio** by Lloyd Alexander

Carlo's uncle has given him a home but feels Carlo will never amount to anything. When Carlo discovers a treasure map, he decides to set out with the shady camel puller, Baksheesh as his guide to look for treasure on the Road of Golden Dreams. Will his dream come true?

**Gossamer** by Lois Lowry

An apprentice dream-giver tries to help a young boy whose nightmares threaten his soul.

**Middle School Is Worse than Meatloaf: A Year Told through Stuff** by Jennifer L. Holm.

Ginny tells the real story of her year in seventh grade through the "stuff" in her life like notes to her friends, her report card, bank book, and foods like meatloaf.

**No Talking** by Andrew Clements

The "Unshushables" are the noisiest students at Laketon Elementary School. And they are known for having boy/girl problems. Things escalate until the boys challenge the girls to a "no talking" contest.

## **Biography & Nonfiction**

**Comic Book Century** by Stephen Krensky

Once thought of as trash reading, comics came of age during the 20th century. Now that they've comics morphed into graphic novels, they have literally changed the way we read.

**Flat-out Rock: Ten Great Bands of the 60's** by Mike Tanner

A mix of musical and cultural history, this book tells about the turbulent 60's when music by the Beatles, the Doors, Janis Joplin, and Led Zeppelin set the country on fire.

**Gross Universe: Your Guide to All Things Disgusting under the Sun** by Jeff Szpirglas

From mucus to vomit, from farts to phlegm, nothing is off-limits in this eye-opening, sometimes stomach-turning exploration of the many things that often go politely unmentioned.

**Planet Yumthing: Create, Design, Reinvent, and Make It Yours!** by Ela Jaynes & Daren Greenblatt

Turn old jeans into a skirt, whip up a nourishing "face salsa", and make over your own room with these fun fashion, design, and cooking ideas.

**The Radioactive Boy Scout** by Ken Silverstein

Working toward his merit badge in atomic energy, David Hahn tried to do the unthinkable--which put his town at risk and brought government agents knocking on his door.

## **Reel Books: Read the Book, See the Movie**

**Because of Winn Dixie** by Kate DiCamillo

**Chronicles of Narnia** by C.S. Lewis

**The Dark Is Rising** (The Seeker as a movie) by Susan Cooper

**The Golden Compass** by Philip Pullman

**Holes** by Louis Sachar

**Hoot** by Carl Hiaasen

**Lord of the Rings** by J.R.R. Tolkien

**Series of Unfortunate Events** by Lemony Snicket